THE NEW
SUNDAY EXPRESS

BENGALURU • SUNDAY • JUNE 21, 2020 • ₹8.00 • PAGES 26 • LATE CITY EDITION

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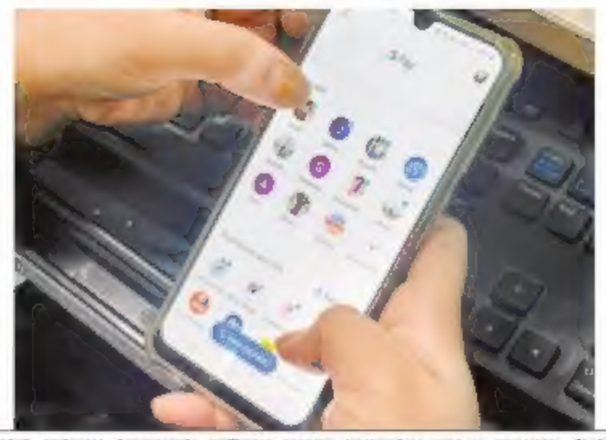

G-PAY NOT PAYMENT SYSTEM OPERATOR: RBI

New Delhi: RBI has told the Delhi High Court that digital wallet platform Google Pay is a third-party app provider and does not operate any payment systems. Therefore, its operations are not in violation of the Payment and Settlement System Act, 2007, the central bank said. The RBI's submissions came in response to PIL alleging that the app was facilitating financial transactions without requisite authorisation.

Modi spoke of LAC situation after June 15 pushback: PMO

Raps spin-doctoring of address at all-party meet; Oppn claims it's obfuscation of truth

MANISH ANAND, PUSHKAR BANAKAR & MAYANK SINGH @New Delhi

IAF chief Rakesh Kumar Singh Bhadauria reviews the Combined Graduation Parade in Hyderabad on Saturday | PTI

SEEKING to put a lid over the controversy sparked by Prime Minister Narendra Modi's statement at the all-party meeting, the Prime Minister's Office on Saturday said "attempts are being made in some quarters to give a mischievous interpretation" to his remarks.

At the meeting on Friday, Modi said "neither is anyone inside our territory nor is any of our post captured," adding that "20 of our brave soldiers made the supreme sacrifice for the nation in Ladakh."

This was interpreted in many circles, political and otherwise, that Modi was denying any transgression and that he had ceded India's land to the Chinese by recognising the status quo, as it is widely believed that Chinese troops are still occupying Indian territory.

"What is Indian territory is clear from the map of India. This Government is strongly and resolutely committed to that," the PMO stated.

Maintaining India's position that it was the Chinese who had crossed the Line of Actual Control (LAC), the PMO said there was an "attempted transgression" in the Galwan Valley by the Chinese in order to erect structures on June 15. This was foiled by the Indian Army, which also gave a "befitting lesson" to the Chinese troops.

"As regards transgression of LAC, it was clearly stated that the violence on June 15 arose because the Chinese side was seeking to erect structures just across the LAC and refused to desist from such actions," the PMO stated.

But the Chinese designs were nixed because of the "sacrifices of the soldiers", it said. The statement said the PM's "observations that there was no Chinese presence on our side of the LAC pertained to the situation as a consequence of the bravery of our armed forces."

Reacting to the clarification, the Congress said, "The PMO's statement is clearly a lame attempt to obfuscate the truth... Is Galwan Valley not part of Indian territory? Why is the government not coming forward and strongly rebutting the Chinese claim?" CONTINUED ON: P8

MEA tears into China narrative on violence

PUSHKAR BANAKAR @New Delhi

INDIA on Saturday issued a point-by-point rebuttal to the Chinese claim made earlier in the day on the Galwan Valley and allegations that it was the Indian side that triggered the violent face-off along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) on June 15. "The position with regard to the Galwan Valley area has been historically clear. Attempts by the Chinese side to now advance exaggerated and untenable claims with regard to the LAC there are not acceptable. They are not in accordance with China's own position in the past," Ministry of External Affairs spokesperson Anurag Srivastava said.

In a series of tweets in the morning, Chinese foreign ministry spokesperson Zhao Lijian had claimed that the Galwan Valley is located on the Chinese side of the LAC in the Western section of the Sino-Indian boundary. "For many years, the Chinese border troops have been patrolling and on duty in this region," he claimed.

Rejecting his allegations, Srivastava said Indian troops are fully familiar with the alignment of the LAC in all sectors, including Galwan Valley.

COVID WAR

14,516 India's Covid-19 positive cases record single-day spike on Saturday

375 Deaths in a day; 12,948 fatalities in total

3,95,048 Total number of cases in the country

For the 9th day in a row, cases swell by over 10,000

KARNATAKA BATTLE

416 Test positive on Saturday

9 DEATHS ON SATURDAY

132 Total deaths

5,391 Total recoveries so far

REPORTS PAGE 6

Boycott may jack up cost of goods by 40%, warn MSMEs

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @New Delhi

AMID demands for a nationwide boycott of Chinese products in the wake of the killing of 20 Indian soldiers on the Ladakh border, the Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) sector has warned that it may jack up the cost of many products by as much as 40 per cent, delaying recovery from the recession the economy has slipped into.

Industry bodies such as the Federation of Indian Micro and Small & Medium Enterprises, the SME Chamber of India and the All India Manufacturers Organisation suggested that the government should think of a long term plan to shift dependency on China for imports. They advised the Centre not to take decisions based on public sentiment.

"This is a serious matter and has to be done rationally and smartly with proper strategy. The import cost of many products will immediately shoot up if we have no alternative plans," FISME president Animesh Saxena said, adding India must make domestic industry more competitive.

The small industries sector has for long been seeking steps to reduce India's dependency on China. "Currently Chinese products dominate the market in many segments like toys. Our domestic toy making industry is slowly being destroyed. Over 80% of toys are now being imported, 75% of which are from China," said Ramesh Gupta, a toy shop wholesaler at Jhandewalan in New Delhi.

Similarly, for the pharma sector, India imports two-thirds of its active ingredients or key ingredients of drugs from China.

WITH THIS ISSUE KITCHEN KIDS PLUS 12 PAGES MAGAZINE

BORDER TENSION

State's yoga instructors in China on tenterhooks

K SHIVA KUMAR @Mysuru

THEY crossed the borders to teach yoga to the people of China and other neighbouring countries and also to find a better living for themselves. But as International Yoga Day dawns, what's weighing heavily on the minds of the yoga instructors from Mysuru and other parts of the state is the ongoing border tensions between India and China.

Although there is no hostile atmosphere in China, the Indian community there is anxious and is closely tracking the developments. A yoga instructor working in China told *The New Sunday Express* that they have not experienced any sort of hostility or public anger towards them, given the prevailing situation.

"We are tracking the developments on the internet, but we don't chat or discuss anything related to the border flare-up on the phone. But some of us friends did meet and discuss the issue. We are hopeful that the Indian consulate will come to our rescue or alert us if the things go out of control", said Ramu (name changed), who hails from Mysuru and is currently based in Shanghai.

For now, the yoga instructors are busy making preparations for International Yoga Day, to be held in all institutes with permission from the local authorities while maintaining social distance. "But if a war-like situation arises, we will fly back to India", he said. P7